

## **Acton Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes for 1/10/2011**

**Present:** Charlie Aaronson, Vice-Chair; Sally Thompson, Secretary; Ann Corcoran; Pat Ellis; Jim Papachristos; Paul Turner; Barbara Willson; Sharon Mercurio, Director; Mike Gowing, Liaison Board of Selectmen; Sgt. Ray Grey, Liaison Police Department.

**Absent:** Barbara Tallone, Chair; Stephen Baran, Treasurer; Norma Wu, President Friends of the COA.

### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Charlie Aaronson at 3:45 PM on 1/10/2011 at the Senior Center. Our newest board member, Ann Corcoran, was welcomed.

Items disseminated at meeting include:  
-Director's Report for December 2010

### **Review of the Minutes- Sally Thompson**

The minutes of the Acton Council on Aging Board meeting for 12/13/10 were amended to correct the date of the meeting and approved.

### **Vice-Chair Report-Charlie Aaronson**

The Town Manager has put out a request for warrants. Mike Gowing is holding a place in the BOS agenda for the COA By-Laws proposal.

### **Director's Report- Sharon Mercurio**

Sharon reports she has attended the monthly Department Head meeting. She has met with HR to re-write the van driver job description in preparation for posting a substitute driver position. She attended a team meeting to assist a client in town. She met with the Minuteman Nutrition Director to discuss alternate meal options. The Inn at Robbins Brook will do a monthly meal at the Acton Senior Center. There was also a discussion about obtaining commodity food. Sharon scheduled CPR/Defibrillator training for staff. She attended a BOS meeting regarding signage for the Senior Center. She met with two home health care agencies and with an elder law attorney to explore programs for the Senior Center. She also met with a human services student at Fitchburg State College who is interested in an internship.

The Senior Center was closed on December 27 due to the blizzard. The septic tank was pumped. Sharon continues to follow up with IT to address various issues (cable TV, printer installation, safety cameras). A mini-refrigerator was donated to the Senior Center for seniors to use for the meals and food they bring to the center.

Upcoming programs are available in the COA Newsletter on the Town of Acton website.

### **Treasurer Report – Steve Baran**

No report.

### **Liaison to BOS- Mike Gowing**

Mike has been working with LRTA to discuss the Road Runner Van and scheduling problems. There are multiple dispatchers serving a number of towns in the metro-west area and there appears to be a scheduling software problem that does not allow dispatchers to schedule the van effectively. Mike is working with the LRTA to improve services.

On 1/11/11 the Minuteman Van Dial-A-Ride will have a 1 cent per ride special. Ridership on the van seems to be rising. Mike has been encouraging the use of scheduling software that has GPS capability. Acton may become a test case for the development of the software.

Mike also mentioned looking into tax relief for Acton seniors who have lived in Acton for greater than or equal to 10 years.

Mike notified the group that Quail Ridge has filed for bankruptcy.

Mike recommended that the COA Board re-new its efforts to bring the new Senior Center project to the public's attention. Paulina Knibbe who championed the study for the development of the new Senior Center has turned her files to the Clerk of Acton.

### **Liaison to Friends of the COA – Norma Wu**

No report.

### **Liaison Acton Police – Sgt. Ray Grey**

The Sergeant has worked with Family Services for almost 20 years, with 3 other officers. They focus on domestic violence and elders. They pass client information on to the COA when appropriate and try to network with other service organizations. They receive daily calls regarding elders as victims of scams. He then described the many forms the scams may take convincing them to send money to the caller who may be impersonating a family member, threatening to harm a family member, notifying the victim they have won a prize, or otherwise luring them into a trap requesting money be sent.

There is a plan to place information in the next issue of the COA Newsletter informing elders about the scams and increasing their awareness of victimization.

### **Liaison to Healthy Communities-Health Department Group-Barbara Willson**

We received the Implementation Grant funds from the Northwest Suburban Health Alliance (CHNA 15) DoN funds from Lahey Clinic. The review committee was very complimentary of the work we accomplished during the 18 month planning grant phase.

Before awarding the funds, we are required to be more specific about how we will apportion the money we set aside for funding projects in the four focus areas - physical wellness, transportation, environmental awareness and food and nutrition. The plan is to send a letter to community folks that we feel are knowledgeable in the focus areas and get their recommendations for projects we should support.

Barbara has put forth Sharon Mercurio's name to develop ideas related to seniors.

**Liaison to Minuteman Senior Services- Charlie Aaronson**

The Minuteman Board of Directors spends the first hour of their monthly meeting listening to reports. The second hour is often a tutorial. Most recently the topic was protective services. Domestic violence often becomes elder abuse. How to detect and report elder abuse to the 24 hour help line.

The Minuteman Board is also developing a 3 year strategic plan. Charlie plans to become part of the process with the goal of learning how to bring the strategic plan process to the COA Board.

**Call for Future Agenda Items – Charlie Aaronson**

Charlie – Place on the March agenda the discussion of the future Senior Center.

Mike – Firemen to educate seniors about fire safety.

Jim – Meals on Wheels is looking for more drivers. How to increase the pool of drivers?

Sharon – Safety concerns at the Senior Center including the entryway and the safety of seniors using the rooms.

**Close Meeting-Next Meeting– Charlie Aaronson**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the COA Board is February 14, 2011. It will be held at the Acton Senior Center at 3:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Thompson, Secretary